

Grover Cleveland Elementary School  
3850 North Albany Street, southwest  
corner of North Albany and West  
Byron Streets  
Chicago  
Cook County  
Illinois

HABS No. ILL-1079

HABS  
ILL,  
16-CHIG,  
77-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D. C. 20240

## GROVER CLEVELAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HABS  
ILL,  
16-CHIG, 77-

Location: 3850 North Albany Street, southwest corner of North Albany and West Byron Streets, Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.

Present Owner: The Chicago Board of Education.

Present Use: Public elementary school.

Statement of Significance: This is one of the more distinguished of many similar school buildings designed by Dwight H. Perkins during his association with the Chicago Board of Education in the first decade of the 20th century. The Cleveland School displays the architect's characteristic preference for large areas of patterned brickwork set in massive cubic compositions with generous provisions made for natural lighting of the interior. Working within the architectural traditions of the Prairie School, Perkins created an original and functional form for this particular building type.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1910.
2. Architect: Dwight H. Perkins (1867-1941).
3. Original and subsequent owners: Legal description: The building is located in the north portion of Block 8 in William E. Hatterman's Irving Park Boulevard Subdivision in Section 24-40-13; being the east one-half, west one-half, northwest quarter of Section 24-40-13, recorded January 9, 1896.

Chain of title: Book 206B, pp. 263, 266, 280-82, Cook County Recorder's Office: The land was acquired from a number of parties in 1909 by the City of Chicago for a school house.

4. Original plan, construction, etc.: The building was published in The Brickbuilder, XX (April, 1911), p. 86, Pls. 43-47 with this description:

Grover Cleveland Elementary School, Chicago, Illinois, plates 43, 44. This building is treated in gray brick and all above in buff. The mortar joints are very wide, scraped off flush with the brick and of the same color. The plan is arranged for the purpose of elementary school instruction, with a large number of rooms, having a maximum window area for light. The assembly hall is centrally located on the second floor with special entrances from the ground floor for the public. The children have direct access to the stage. There is no basement, the first floor being on the ground level. The manual training, domestic science, construction work and drawing are provided for in the ordinary classroom units. The corridor extends from one end to the other through the center with four ample staircases, one at each end and two at intermediate points, which afford the greatest facility for egress in time of panic or for the ordinary transfer of classes. The plans provide for twenty-six rooms in addition to the assembly hall and gymnasium, and will accommodate 1,300 pupils. The building is entirely fireproof and cost approximately \$240,000.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

Perkins designed over 40 buildings and additions for the Chicago school system during his tenure as architect for the Board of Education. He served from 1905 to 1910, when he was tried by the Board of Education for "incompetency, extravagance and insubordination." Perkins was convicted on the last two charges and dismissed, despite the protests of many civic organizations and individuals. Wright, pp. 510-11.

C. Sources of Information:

Condit, Carl W. The Chicago School of Architecture. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964.

Siegel, Arthur (ed.). Chicago's Famous Buildings. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965.

The Brickbuilder. XX (April, 1911). p. 86.

"Dwight Heald Perkins," The Brickbuilder, XXIV (June, 1915).

"Mr. Perkins and the Chicago Board of Education," The Brickbuilder, XIX (May, 1910).

An editorial praising the work of Perkins for the Board of Education and condemning those "amateurs" that sought his removal.

Perkins, Dwight Heald, and Taylor, Howell. "The Functions and Plan of Community Buildings," The Architectural Record, LVI (October, 1924).

Illustrations of Chicago settlements and recreation centers, schools, etc. by Perkins, Fellows and Hamilton, Pond and Pond, and others.

"Three New Schoolhouses, Chicago," The Brickbuilder, XVIII (November, 1909).

Includes Bernhard Moos School, Albert G. Lane Technical High School, and Tilton School.

Wright, Peter B. "Public School Architecture at Chicago," The Architectural Record, XXVII (June, 1910).

Grover Cleveland School is not included in the plates of Perkins' schools in the city.

Brooks, H. Allen. "The Prairie School, The American Spirit in Midwest Residential Architecture, 1891-1916."

Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Department of Art, Northwestern University, 1957.

Prepared by Larry J. Homolka, Historian  
and Assistant Supervisor  
National Park Service  
August, 1965

### PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

The records and measured drawings of this structure were made during the 1965 Chicago III Project. This was the third in a series of four summer projects designed to record the significant architecture of the Chicago area. Special attention was given to the Chicago and Prairie Schools of Architecture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The project was sponsored by Mr. Earl A. Reed, FAIA. He was assisted by a Finance Committee composed of John Fugard, FAIA; William E. Hartmann, FAIA; Alfred Shaw, FAIA; and a Selection Committee consisting of James Arkin, AIA; Ruth Schoneman, Art Institute of Chicago; and J. Carson Webster, Northwestern University. Organizations cooperating with HABS in this project were the City of Chicago, the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and its Foundation, the Society of Architectural Historians, the Garrick Salvage Fund, and the Women's Architectural League of Chicago. The University of Illinois provided office space.

Professor J. William Rudd, then of the University of Cincinnati, served as the project supervisor. Other members of the summer team were assistant supervisor and Historian, Larry Homolka, Harvard University; photographers, Harold Allen and Richard Nickel; secretary, Mrs. Bert P. Schloss, and student architects, Gary Burk, Texas Technological College; Charles Gregersen, Illinois Institute of Technology; Edward Popko, University of Florida; and Thomas Ross, University of Illinois, Urbana.